

Amendments to Claims

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims.

Claim Listing

1. (Previously Presented) A computer based method for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity comprising the steps of:
 - a. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties,
 - b. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,;
 - c. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
 - d. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- e. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,
- f. carrying out steps a – e using at least one computer processor and at least one computer storage means,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program.

2. (Deleted)
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein participating is selected from the group consisting of: participating only by carrying out the incentive award program and participating not only by carrying out the incentive award program but additionally as a transacting party.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the transacting party comprises any entity engaging in a quantifiable transaction, the transaction characterized by the business entity providing an incentive award.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least two of the transacting parties are recipients, and wherein a total incentive award for the quantifiable transaction is the sum of all incentive awards provided to each recipient in the transaction, the business entity determining the portion of the total award provided to each recipient.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the transacting parties pays a fee to the business entity, the transacting party acting as a supplier to a customer and the customer being provided an incentive award by the business entity.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein at least one real estate agent becomes a transacting party by paying a fee to the business entity, and wherein the business entity provides the incentive award to at least one recipient, the at least one recipient being selected from the group consisting of the seller of the property, the buyer of the property, the lessor of the property, the lessee of the property, the real estate agent for the seller, the real estate agent finding the buyer, the real estate agency listing the property, the multiple listing service provider, the real estate agency with which the agent finding the buyer is affiliated, and the real estate agency with which the agent representing the seller is affiliated.
8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient comprises the business entity choosing which of the transacting parties are to be encouraged to engage in the quantifiable transaction.
9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the recipient designates at least one other party to receive at least a part of the recipient's incentive award, said other party comprising any entity.
10. (Deleted)
11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program is selected from the group consisting of options, warrants, restricted stock, shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock and shares of tracking stock.
12. (Deleted)
13. (Deleted)
14. (Deleted)
15. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the incentive award gets larger as the value of the quantifiable transaction gets larger.

16. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the value of the quantifiable transaction comprises the total revenue amount of the transaction.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein a larger incentive award is provided when at least two measures of the transaction are more valuable to the business entity, said measures selected from the group consisting of profitability of the transaction to the business entity, the transaction's total revenue amount and at least one parameter indicative of geographical location related to the transaction.

18. (Deleted)

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the amount of the incentive award is based upon the value of the transaction for which the award is granted, said transaction occurring within a predefined period, relative to the total value of all transactions for which incentive awards were awarded during the predefined period.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a ratio between the value of the incentive award and the value of the quantifiable transaction remains in effect for a predefined period of time, and wherein a larger incentive award is provided when at least two measures of the transaction are more valuable to the business entity, said measures selected from the group consisting of profitability of the transaction to the business entity, the transaction's total revenue amount and at least one parameter indicative of geographical location related to the transaction.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a ratio between the value of the incentive award and the value of the quantifiable transaction applicable during a predefined initial period of operation of the incentive award program is larger than during subsequent periods.

22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein a sum of progressively smaller incentive awards provided over all of the periods of operation of the incentive award program asymptotically approaches a limit that represents the total incentive awards provided for all quantifiable transactions.

23. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of providing further comprises the steps of:

- a. receiving funding to enable operation of the incentive award program;
- b. determining an amount of the incentive award;
- c. crediting said amount into a recipient's account;

- d. furnishing periodic statements of account to the recipient; and
- e. cashing-in the incentive award on behalf of the recipient.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein receiving funding comprises receiving income as a fee from at least one fee-paying party, wherein the fee is selected from the group consisting of a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions in a market, a fee paid for rights to conduction transactions in a geographical area, a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions in a medium of commerce, a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions on the Internet, a fee paid per quantifiable transaction, a periodic maintenance fee and a fee paid to defray operating costs of the incentive award program.

25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 24, wherein the at least one fee-paying party is selected from the group consisting of the business entity and any transacting party.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein determining an amount of the incentive award further comprises the step of:

- a. apportioning a part of the funding to fund the chosen investment vehicle on behalf of the recipient and crediting the apportioning to the recipient's account.

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein determining an amount of the incentive award further comprises the step of:

- a. determining a number of instruments of ownership in the chosen investment vehicle to be issued on behalf of the recipient and crediting said instruments to the recipient's account.

28. (Original) The method of claim 27, further comprising the step of:

- a. estimating on a predetermined date a monetary value of the instruments of ownership in recipient's account by multiplying the number of instruments of ownership credited to the account by the unit value of the instruments on the predetermined date.

29. (Original) The method of claim 28, wherein the instruments of ownership credited to the account are shares of stock listed on a stock of exchange.

30. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein the cashing-in of the incentive award must occur within a predetermined period after the lapse of a period of time, else the incentive award expires worthless.

31. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein the recipient selects the cashing-in date within the predetermined period.
32. (Original) The method of claim 30, wherein the business entity selects the cashing-in date within the predetermined period.
33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the cashing-in of the incentive award, wherein the incentive award is in instruments of ownership in an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program, further comprises the step of:
- a. issuing said instruments; and
 - b. selling the issued instruments, whereby said selling provides funds in the amount of a monetary value of the incentive award, and whereby said selling leads to dilution of the unit value of previously issued instruments of equity ownership.
34. (Original) The method of claim 33, wherein cashing-in of the incentive award further comprises the steps of:
- a. ascertaining on the date of the cashing-in a value of the investment in the chosen investment vehicle; and
 - b. transferring the ascertained value to the recipient and deducting the ascertained value from the balance in recipient's account.
35. (Deleted)
36. (Deleted)
37. (Previously Presented) A computer based method for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity through an Internet portal site comprising the steps of:
- a. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties and being transacted through an Internet portal site,
 - b. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,
 - c. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
 - d. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

e. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program.

38. (Deleted)

39. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein the quantifiable transaction is transacted from an incentive award web site on the Internet and wherein the Internet portal site provides exclusive access to the incentive award web sites.

40. (Original) The method of claim 39, further comprising the step of:

a. an authorized operator operating at least one incentive award web site.

41. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein participating is selected from the group consisting of: participating only by carrying out the incentive award program and participating not only by carrying out the incentive award program but additionally as a transacting party.

42. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein the transacting party comprises any entity engaging in a quantifiable transaction, the transaction characterized by the business entity providing an incentive award.

43. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein at least two of the transacting parties are recipients, and wherein a total incentive award for the quantifiable transaction is the sum of all incentive awards provided to each recipient in the transaction, the business entity determining the portion of the total award provided to each recipient.

44. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein at least one of the transacting parties pays a fee to the business entity, said transacting party acting as a supplier to a customer and the customer being provided an incentive award by the business entity.

45. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient comprises the business entity choosing which of the transacting parties in a quantifiable transaction are to be encouraged to engage in the transaction.

46. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein the recipient designates at least one other party to receive at least a part of the recipient's incentive award, said other party comprising any entity.

47. (Deleted)

48. (Deleted)

49. (Deleted)

50. (Deleted)

51. (Deleted)

52. (Deleted)

53. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein the incentive award gets larger as the value of the quantifiable transaction gets larger.

54. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein the value of the quantifiable transaction comprises the total revenue amount of the transaction.

55. (Original) The method of claim 53, wherein a larger incentive award is provided when at least two measures of the transaction are more valuable to the business entity, said measures selected from the group consisting of profitability of the transaction to the business entity, the transaction's total revenue amount and at least one parameter indicative of geographical location related to the transaction.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 37, wherein the investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program is selected from the group consisting of options, warrants, restricted stock, shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock and shares of tracking stock.

57. (Original) The method of claim 56, wherein a ratio between the amount of the incentive award and the value of the quantifiable transaction remains in effect for a predetermined period of time, and wherein a larger incentive award is provided when at least two measures of the transaction are more valuable to the business entity, said measures selected from the group consisting of profitability of the transaction to the business entity, the transaction's total revenue amount and at least one parameter indicative of geographical location related to the transaction.

58. (Original) The method of claim 56, wherein a ratio between the amount of the incentive award and the value of the quantifiable transaction applicable during a predefined initial period of operation of the incentive award program is larger than during subsequent periods.

59. (Original) The method of claim 58, wherein the cumulative sum of the progressively smaller incentive awards provided over all of the periods of operation of the incentive award program asymptotically approaches a limit that represents the total incentive awards provided for all quantifiable transactions.

60. (Original) The method of claim 37, wherein providing further comprises steps of:

- a. receiving funding to enable operation of the incentive award program;
- b. determining an amount of the incentive award;
- c. crediting said amount into a recipient's account;
- d. furnishing periodic statements of account to the recipient; and
- e. cashing-in the incentive award on behalf of the recipient.

61. (Original) The method of claim 60, wherein receiving funding comprises receiving income as a fee from at least one fee-paying party, wherein the fee is selected from the group consisting of a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions in a market, a fee paid for rights to conduction transactions in a geographical area, a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions in a medium of commerce, a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions on the Internet, a fee paid per quantifiable transaction, a periodic maintenance fee and a fee paid to defray operating costs of the incentive award program.

62. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, wherein the at least one fee-paying party is selected from the group consisting of the business entity, and any transacting party.

63. (Deleted)

64. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60, wherein determining an amount of the incentive award further comprises the step of:

- a. determining a number of instruments of ownership in the chosen investment vehicle to be designated to the benefit of the recipient and crediting the number of instruments of ownership to the recipient's account.

65. (Original) The method of claim 64, further comprising the step of:

- a. estimating on a predetermined date a monetary value of the instruments of ownership in recipient's account by multiplying the number of instruments of

ownership credited to the account by the unit value of the instruments on the predetermined date.

66. (Original) The method of claim 65, wherein the instruments of ownership credited to the recipient's account are shares of stock listed on a stock exchange.

67. (Original) The method of claim 60, wherein the cashing-in of the incentive award must occur within a predetermined period after the lapse of a period of time, else the incentive award expires worthless.

68. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 60, wherein the cashing-in of the incentive award further comprises the steps of:

- a. issuing instruments of ownership in the value of the entity; and
- b. selling the issued instruments, whereby said selling provides funds in the amount of a monetary value of the incentive award, and whereby said selling leads to dilution of the unit value of previously issued instruments of ownership.

69. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 68, wherein cashing-in of the incentive award further comprises the steps of:

- a. ascertaining on the date of the cashing-in a value of the investment in the chosen investment vehicle; and
- b. transferring the ascertained value to the recipient; and
- c. deducting the ascertained value from a balance in recipient's account.

70. (Deleted)

71. (Deleted)

72. (Previously Presented) A computer based method for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity over a communications network comprising the steps of:

- a. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties, and at least part of the quantifiable transaction being transacted on a communications network,
- b. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity;
- c. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- d. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

e. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,

f. carrying out steps a – e using at least one computer processor and at least one computer storage means,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program.

73. (Deleted)

74. (Original) The method of claim 72, wherein the communications network comprises a communications means for conducting at least part of a transaction, wherein the transaction is selected from the group consisting of credit transactions, credit card transactions, debit transactions, debit card transactions, smart card transactions, wire transfer transactions, line of credit transactions, Internet transactions, auctions, reverse auctions and lotteries.

75. (Original) The method of claim 74, wherein the communication means for conducting is selected from the group consisting of electronic means, telephonic means, wireless means, general packet radio service means, UMTS means and optical fiber means.

76. (Original) The method of claim 75, further comprising the step of the quantifiable transaction being transacted from a web site on the Internet by a transacting party.

77. (Previously Presented) A computer based method for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity comprising the steps of:

- a. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties,
- b. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,
- c. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- d. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- e. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,
- f. displaying at least one certifying mark, the mark identifying the incentive award program,
- g. carrying out steps a – e and optionally step f using at least one computer processor and at least one computer storage means,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program.

78. (Deleted)

79. (Original) The method of claim 77, wherein the certifying mark comprises two components, each component having an identifying function, wherein a first component identifies the business entity as an entity whose quantifiable transactions provide to recipients investments as incentive awards, and wherein a second component uniquely identifies the business entity with a group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and authorized operators of the incentive award program.

80. (Original) The method of claim 79, wherein the business entity grants a right to use the certifying mark to a transacting party, whereby the mark identifies the transacting party as an entity whose quantifiable transactions provide recipients with incentive awards.

81. (Previously Presented) A computer based method for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity through an Internet portal site comprising the steps of:

- a. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties, and being transacted through an Internet portal site,
- b. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,
- c. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- d. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}$, where

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- e. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,
- f. displaying at least one certifying mark, the mark identifying the incentive award program,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

82. (Deleted)

83. (Original) The method of claim 82, wherein the certifying mark comprises two components, each component having an identifying function, wherein a first component identifies the business entity as an entity whose quantifiable transactions provide to recipients investments as incentive awards, and wherein a second component uniquely identifies the business entity within a group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and all authorized operators of the incentive award program.

84. (Original) The method of claim 83, wherein the second component uniquely identifies incentive award web sites to which the Internet portal site provides exclusive access.

85. (Original) The method of claim 84, wherein the business entity grants a right to use the certifying mark to a transacting party who operates at least one incentive award web site, whereby the mark identifies the transacting party as an entity whose quantifiable transactions provide recipients with incentive awards.

86. (Previously Presented) A computer based method for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity comprising the steps of:

- a. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties,
- b. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,

- c. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- d. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- e. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,
- f. providing at least one transacting party in the quantifiable transaction a chance to win in a lottery the incentive award, and
- g. carrying out steps a - f using at least one computer processor and at least one computer storage means,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program,
wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

87. (Deleted)

88. (Previously Presented) A computer based method for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity through an Internet portal site comprising the steps of:

- a. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties, and being transacted through an Internet portal site,
- b. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,
- c. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- d. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- e. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,
- f. providing at least one transacting party in the quantifiable transaction a chance to win at least one prize in a lottery as an incentive award, the prize being an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

89. (Deleted)

90. (Original) The method of claim 86 or 88, wherein the chance to win is in proportion to a value of the quantifiable transaction, the value being determined by the business entity.

91. **(Currently Amended)** A computer-executed method for implementing an incentive award program by a business entity comprising a computer processor and a computer memory storage device, said method comprising:

- a. inputting into the storage device logic providing an incentive award for each of a plurality of quantifiable transactions;
- b. receiving signals representing data descriptive of a quantifiable transaction for which an incentive award is offered;
- c. determining at least one recipient of the incentive award;
- d. transmitting and receiving signals representing data indicative of a chosen incentive award, wherein the incentive award is an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- e. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- e. providing the incentive award, and
- f. cashing-in the incentive award,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

92. (Deleted)

93. (Original) The method of claim 91, wherein determining at least one recipient comprises analyzing data descriptive of the quantifiable transaction using the logic stored in the storage device.

94. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 92, wherein transmitting and receiving signals indicative of choosing comprises:

- a. furnishing recipient with data indicative of the offered investment;
- b. processing signals representing data descriptive of the offered investment using the logic stored in the storage device, said processing providing a result, wherein said result comprises a calculation of an amount of the incentive award;
- c. storing the result in a database in the storage device, wherein said storing causes an account to be created on behalf of the recipient.

95. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 91, wherein providing the incentive award comprises:

- a. calculating an amount of the award in the chosen investment using the logic stored in the storage device and the stored result,
- b. crediting the amount of the award into the recipient's account;
- c. transmitting signals periodically to the recipient, said signals representing data descriptive of a periodic statement of the recipient's account.

96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 91, wherein cashing-in the incentive award comprises,

- a. determining from the stored logic and the stored result that a balance in the account is eligible to be disbursed;
- b. conveying to the recipient the monetary value of the balance in the account.

97. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 91, wherein cashing-in the incentive award comprises using stored logic, and the stored result:

- a. determining from the stored logic and the stored result that a balance in the account is eligible to be disbursed;
- b. issuing instruments of ownership in an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program;
- c. selling the issued instruments of ownership;
- d. conveying to the recipient the monetary value of the sold instruments in an amount equal to recipient's balance in the account.

98. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity, the apparatus comprising:

- a. a computer memory storage device;
- b. a computer processor connected to the storage device;
- c. the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor,
- d. and the processor operative with the program to perform the steps of:
- e. participating in a quantifiable transaction, said transaction having at least two transacting parties,
- f. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity, the incentive award comprising at least one investment chosen from a plurality of vehicles for investment,
- g. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- h. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F₁ is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- i. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein at least one authorized operator is carrying out at least in part the incentive award program.

99. (Deleted)

100. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein participating is selected from the group consisting of: participating only by carrying out the incentive award program and participating not only by carrying out the incentive award program but additionally as a transacting party.

101. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the transacting party comprises any entity engaging in a quantifiable transaction, the transaction characterized by the business entity providing an incentive award.

102. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein at least two of the transacting parties are recipients, and wherein a total incentive award for the quantifiable transaction is the sum of all incentive awards provided to each recipient in the transaction, the business entity determining the portion of the total award provided to each recipient.

103. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein at least one of the transacting parties pays a fee to the business entity, the transacting party acting as a supplier to a customer and the customer being provided an incentive award by the business entity.

104. (Original) The apparatus of claim 103, wherein at least one real estate agent becomes a transacting party by paying a fee to the business entity, and wherein the business entity provides the incentive award to at least one recipient, the at least one recipient being selected from the group consisting of the seller of the property, the buyer of the property, the lessor of the property, the lessee of the property, the real estate agent for the seller, the real estate agent finding the buyer, the real estate agency listing the property, the multiple listing service provider, the real estate agency with which the agent finding the buyer is affiliate, and the real estate agency with which the agent representing the seller is affiliated.

105. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient comprises the business entity choosing which of the transacting parties are to be encouraged to engage in the quantifiable transaction.

106. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the recipient designates at least one other party to receive at least a part of the recipient's incentive award, said other party comprising any entity.

107. (Deleted)

108. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program is selected from the group consisting of options,

warrants, restricted stock, shares of common stock, shares of preferred stock and shares of tracking stock.

109. (Deleted)

110. (Deleted)

111. (Deleted)

112. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the incentive award gets larger as the value of the quantifiable transaction gets larger.

113. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the value of the quantifiable transaction comprises the total revenue amount of the transaction.

114. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein a larger incentive award is provided when at least two measures of the transaction are more valuable to the business entity, said measures selected from the group consisting of profitability of the transaction to the business entity, the transaction's total revenue amount and at least one parameter indicative of geographical location related to the transaction.

115. (Deleted)

116. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the amount of the incentive award is based upon the value of the transaction for which the award is granted, said transaction occurring within a predefined period, relative to the total value of all transactions for which incentive awards were awarded during the predefined period.

117. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein a ratio between the value of the incentive award and the value of the quantifiable transaction remains in effect for a predefined period of time, and wherein a larger incentive award is provided when at least two measures of the transaction are more valuable to the business entity, said measures selected from the group consisting of profitability of the transaction to the business entity, the transaction's total revenue amount and at least one parameter indicative of geographical location related to the transaction.

118. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 98, where a ratio between the amount of the incentive award and the value of the quantifiable transaction applicable during a predefined initial period of operation of the incentive award program is larger than during subsequent periods.

119. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein a sum of progressively smaller incentive awards provided over all of the periods of operation of the incentive award program asymptotically approaches a limit that represents the total incentive awards provided for all quantifiable transactions.

120. (Original) The apparatus of claim 98, wherein the step of providing further comprises the steps of:

- a. receiving funding to enable operation of the incentive award program;
- b. determining an amount of the incentive award;
- c. crediting said amount into a recipient's account;
- d. furnishing periodic statements of account to the recipient; and
- e. cashing-in the incentive award on behalf of the recipient.

121. (Original) The apparatus of claim 120, wherein the receiving funding comprises receiving income as a fee from at least one fee-paying party, wherein the fee is selected from the group consisting of a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions in a market, a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions in a geographical area, a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions in a medium of commerce, a fee paid for rights to conduct transactions on the Internet, a fee paid per quantifiable transaction, a periodic maintenance fee and a fee paid to defray operating costs of the incentive award program.

122. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 121, wherein the at least one fee-paying party is selected from the group consisting of the business entity and any transacting party.

123. (Deleted)

124. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 120, wherein determining an amount of the incentive award further comprises the step of:

- a. determining a number of instruments of ownership in the chosen investment vehicle to be issued on behalf of the recipient and crediting them to the recipient's account.

125. (Original) The apparatus of claim 124, further comprising the step of:

- a. estimating on a predetermined date a monetary value of recipient's account by multiplying the number of instruments of ownership credited to the account by the unit value of said instruments on the predetermined date.

126. (Original) The apparatus of claim 125, wherein the instruments of ownership credited to the account are shares of stock listed on a stock exchange.

127. (Original) The apparatus of claim 120, wherein the cashing-in of the incentive award must occur within a predetermined period after the lapse of a period of time, else the incentive award expires worthless.

128. (Original) The apparatus of claim 127, wherein the recipient selects the cashing-in date within the predetermined period.

129. (Original) The apparatus of claim 127, wherein the business entity selects the cashing-in date within the predetermined period.

130. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 120, wherein the cashing-in of the incentive award, wherein the incentive award is further comprises the step of:

- a. issuing said instruments; and
- b. selling the issued instruments, whereby said selling provides funds in the amount of a monetary value of the incentive award, and whereby said selling leads to dilution of the unit value of previously issued instruments of equity ownership.

131. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 130, wherein cashing-in of the incentive award further comprises the steps of:

- a. ascertaining on the date of the cashing-in a value of the chosen investment; and
- b. transferring the ascertained value to the recipient and deducting the ascertained value from the balance in recipient's account.

132. (Deleted)

133. (Deleted)

134. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity, through an Internet portal site, the apparatus comprising:

- a. a computer memory storage device;
- b. a computer process operated by the business entity and connected to the storage device;
- c. the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor;
- d. and the processor operative with the program to perform the steps of;
- e. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties and being transacted through an Internet portal site,
- f. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,

- g. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- h. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- i. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

135. (Deleted)

136. (Original) The apparatus of claim 134, wherein the quantifiable transaction is transacted from an incentive award web site on the Internet and wherein the Internet portal site provides exclusive access to the incentive award web sites.

137. (Original) The apparatus of claim 134, further comprising the step of:

- a. an authorized operator operating at least one incentive award web site.

138. (Deleted)

139. (Deleted)

140. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity over a communications network, the apparatus comprising:

- a. a computer memory storage device; and
- b. a computer processor connected to the storage device;
- c. the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor, and
- d. the processor operative with the program to perform the steps of:
- e. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties, and at least part of the quantifiable transaction being transacted on a communications network,

- f. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity,
- g. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- h. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F₁ is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- i. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program, and wherein the communications network comprises a communication means for conducting a transaction, wherein the transaction is selected from the group consisting of credit transactions, credit card transactions, debit transactions, debit card transactions, smart card transactions, wire transfer transactions, line of credit transactions, Internet transactions, auctions, reverse auctions and lotteries.

141. (Deleted)

142. (Original) The apparatus of claim 140, wherein the communication means for conducting is selected from the group consisting of electronic means, telephonic means, wireless means, general packet radio service means, UMTS means and optical fiber means.

143. (Original) The apparatus of claim 142, further comprising the step of the quantifiable transaction being transacted from a web site on the Internet by a transacting party.

144. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity, the apparatus comprising:

- a. a computer memory storage device;
- b. a computer processor operated by the business entity and connected to the storage device;
- c. the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor,

- d. and the processor operative with the program to perform the steps of:
- e. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties,
- f. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity, the incentive award comprising at least one investment chosen from a plurality of vehicles for investment,
- g. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- h. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- i. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,
- j. displaying at least one certifying mark, the mark identifying the incentive award program,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

145. (Deleted)

146. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for carrying out an incentive award program by a business entity, the apparatus comprising:

- a. a computer memory storage device;
- b. a computer processor operated by the business entity and connected to the storage device;
- c. the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor,
- d. and the processor operative with the program to perform the steps of:
- e. participating in a quantifiable transaction, the quantifiable transaction having at least two transacting parties,
- f. determining at least one of the transacting parties to be a recipient of an incentive award offered by the business entity, the incentive award comprising at least one investment chosen from a plurality of vehicles for investment,

- g. choosing as the incentive award an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program,
- h. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- i. providing the chosen incentive award to the recipient,
- j. providing at least one transacting party in the quantifiable transaction a chance in a lottery the incentive award,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

147. (Deleted)

148. **(Currently Amended)** An apparatus for implementing an incentive award program carried out by a business entity, the apparatus comprising:

- a. a computer memory storage device;
- b. a computer processor operated by the business entity and connected to the storage device;
- c. the storage device storing a program for controlling the processor,
- d. and the processor operative with the program to perform the steps of:
- e. inputting into the storage device logic comprising terms and conditions for providing an incentive award for each of a plurality of quantifiable transactions;
- f. receiving signals representing data descriptive of a quantifiable transaction for which an incentive award is offered;
- g. determining at least one recipient of the incentive award;
- h. transmitting and receiving signals representing data indicative of a chosen incentive award, wherein the incentive award is an investment vehicle that is equity in the incentive award program;
- i. calculating the incentive award according to the formula:

$$F_n = F_1 R^{n-1}, \text{ where}$$

n is the current period since the onset of carrying out the method;

F_1 is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the first period of carrying out the method;

F_n is the fraction of ownership rights in the chosen equity provided to the recipient in the current period of carrying out the method;

R is a multiplier fraction greater than zero and less than one by which the provided fraction of ownership rights changes in successive periods;

- j. providing the incentive award, and
- k. cashing-in the incentive award,

wherein the business entity is selected from the group consisting of the owner of the incentive award program and an authorized operator of the incentive award program, wherein the authorized operator has authority to carry out at least in part the incentive award program.

149. (Deleted)